

**REMARKS**

**I. Status of the claims**

Claims 1-22 are pending. No claims have been amended, cancelled, or added.

**II. Summary of the Office Action**

(i) Claims 1-5, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being allegedly anticipated by *Vos et al.* (WO 00/34518, published on June 15, 2000).

(ii) Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over *Vos et al.*

(iii) Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over *Vos et al.* in view of *Schena et al.* (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 93, 10614-10619, 1996).

(iv) Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over *Vos et al.* in view of *Van Ness et al.* (USP 6,248,521).

(v) Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over *Vos et al.*

**III. *Vos et al.* (WO 00/34518) is not prior art**

As the Examiner correctly noted, *Vos et al.* is prior art as of its publication date, *i.e.*, June 15, 2000. However, the present application claims priority to three U.S. provisional applications, 60/193,042 filed March 29, 2000, 60/252,551 filed November 21, 2000 and 60/252,747 filed November 22, 2000. Applicant's claim for domestic priority was acknowledged by the Patent Office in Paper 7, dated February 25, 2002. Accordingly, the earliest effective filing date of the present application is March 29, 2000. *Vos et al.* is not prior art to the above-referenced applicatoin. Since *Vos et al.* is the primary reference in each rejection, and since *Vos et al.* is not available prior art, all of the rejections should be withdrawn.

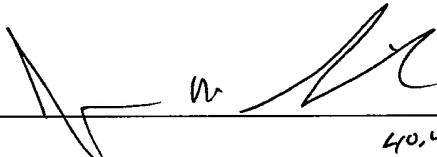
**IV. Conclusion**

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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